

YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORK.

BY CLARA WORST.

(Read at Ashland Convention, 1894.)

In this ambitious world of ours, what more sorrowful can be conceived than an aged man, standing on the brink of Eternity, looking down the long vista of his years, only to see opportunities unimproved? Cloth will not begin anew to spin that thread of life, and his actions must go forth into the world freighted with their burden of good or evil influence. And grim Atropos, standing near, with those accursed scissors will sever at an unexpected moment the slender thread of his earthly existence.

Age is the season of retrospection, when the time has almost come to "shuffle off this mortal coil," then, and not until then, will the hand of Time have loosened the wondrous clasp of the volume of life, and its many colored pages be clearly presented to the mind's eye. Then, how often, with regret, do they turn back those leaves, edged with a dying hope, each page telling in mystic story the record of a day past. He hath wasted his youth. Angels solemnly chant the sad refrain, and methinks, as it is echoed through the corridors of time, the angel of God sheds a silent tear.

Youth is the season of dreams and high resolves. But he, who builds within childhood's fleeting hours lofty air castles, in manhood, soon learns that the world requires the added force of action, for, purposes without work is dead. God has given us existence, with full power and opportunity to improve it. "We can make our lives sublime". It is a solemn duty then both towards God and man, that each young person should strive to live for something, something worthy of life and its capabilities, and to do this involves the necessity of an intelligent and definite plan of action. And yet, how brief is the brightest human life! If you want to illustrate it, you will quote from Job: "A man cometh forth as a flower, and is cut down", or, from the Psalmist: "As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth, the wind passeth over it, and it is gone."

Then, is worldly aspiration the only thought that should fill the young mind? Did not Solomon, the wisest of men, say: "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth?"

The little child, kneeling by its mother's side, with hands clasped and eyes raised unto heaven, while it breathes in prayer the sacred words, "Our Father which art in heaven," is the true symbol of early piety.

Religion in youth frames the mind for spiritual work, and, like the touch of Midas, converts the humblest call of duty into glittering gold of untold worth for the kingdom of God. Isaac Watts, the great Christian poet, was converted at nine years

of age; while Jonathan Edwards, the greatest of American logicians, was converted when only seven years of age.

"In the morning sow thy seed." After reason has begun her sway, then does the youth receive those impressions and contract those habits which impel him towards the good and true, or towards the evil and false.

Before he sows wild oats, get him to sow wheat and barley. Fill the bushel measure with good corn and there will be no room for husks. I fear that heavenly distribution of spoils will be a surprise to many, "for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

As yet, I have spoken in exhortation, and to the degree that Young Peoples' work contains within its world-wide embrace only those duties that pertain to the preparation for a useful future. But, each day makes manifest the grand results of the children's presence. Behold! from the four winds they come, alone bearing the garlands of victory. It may truly be said, Young Peoples' work wide as the earth has its summit in heaven. The various Churches of the land have prospered greatly under the auspices of their Young Peoples' societies. Christian missionaries are supported in distant heathen countries, orphan homes are established and maintained by their contributions, and the poor know no bounds to their liberality. The angels smile at the good they have done, but the poor man that knows them smiles more sweetly than all, for they were his administering angels in time of want.

A little girl is a teacher, whose lessons few can resist.

When seasons of comfort and delight awaits the parents who are being drawn, insensibly, perhaps, into a higher and better life! They recall us from much that produced and encourages selfishness, that roughens the manners, and that hardens the heart. Great as is the influence of a little child while living, it has also a sweet and sacred influence, when its brief life is o'er and the solemn "Dust unto dust" has been said over the little grave.

The greatest present that God ever gave our world was a little child; and he gave it on a Christmas morn, and it was of such value that the gates of heaven were swung open and angels came down to join with the world in a song of thanksgiving.

The gloomy apartment in the town of London occupied by Elizabeth, before she wore the royal crown of Eng., and while she was draining her cup of sorrows, was brightened by a single ray of light in the form of a little child, the gardener's son, who came to her every morning, bringing fresh flowers as a token of his sympathy.

It was a little captive maiden in Naaman's kitchen that told the great Syrian warrior where he might go and get cured of the leprosy, which, at his seventh plunge in the

Jordan, was left at the bottom of the river.

A child decided Waterloo, showing the army of Blucher how they could take a short cut through the fields, when, if the old road had been followed, the Prussian General would have come up too late to save the destinies of Europe.

And, to the child of to-day are extended the means to usher in the world's salvation or destruction. We are informed that the wolf, the leopard, and the lion shall yet be so domesticated that "a little child shall lead them."

And, when we recall that first sweet children's day, when the blessed Savior opened his arms so kindly to each little one and uttered as a benediction those memorable words, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven", we know they are only doing their sacred duty toward their Master. And

"To-day we bring our children,

For a blessing ever as then;

Receive them, O dear Lord Jesus,
Again, this children's day!"

RAGS OR SOULS?

When Captain Murrell came up with the sinking steamer, Denmark, he had to decide between freight and people. The question was, "Shall I save my bales of rags and let the people go down, or shall I throw overboard my rags and save the people?" It took the noble captain but a moment to decide. Over went the rags and the people were saved. There are in this world thousands of sinking ships. They are morally and spiritually water-logged. They are going down in an ocean of despair, unless rescue comes. With many Christians it is simply a question between precious souls and dollars. The Church of Christ is not poor to-day. It is loaded down with money in the pockets of not a few of its members. It is a question between *rags and souls*. When you win a soul to God, you have transmuted your opportunity into immortality. Time, money, and talents may be so invested as to yield results for eternity.—A. C. Dixon.

The phrase by which many of the skeptics of this generation designate that Supreme Intelligence whose existence they cannot utterly deny, is the "Unknowable." Having at the suggestion of Prof. Huxley in 1869, called themselves *agnostics*, or *unknowing*, they then seem to think it necessary that every body else should be as ignorant as they themselves are. The Athenians, in their blind reaching after God, wrote upon their altar, "*Agnosto Theo* ; to an unknown God;" but they did not say he was "unknowable." They confessed their own ignorance, but did not undertake to assert the ignorance of every one else.